

THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## WILLING TO DIE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE ROSE AND THE KEY."

### CHAPTER LXVII. A CHAPTER OF EXPLANATIONS.

LAURA'S long talk with me cleared up her story.

She was the only daughter of Mr. Grey, of Halston Manor, of whom I had often heard. He had died in possession of a great estate, and of shares in the Great Central Bank worth two hundred thousand pounds. Within a few weeks after his death the bank failed, and the estate was drawn into the ruin. Of her brother there is no need to speak, for he died only a year after, and has no connexion with my story.

Laura Grey would have been a suitable, and even a princely match for a man of rank and fortune, had it not been for this sudden and total reverse. Old Lord Rillingdon—Viscount Rillingdon, his son, had won his own step in the peerage by brilliant service—had wished to marry his son to the young lady. No formal overtures had been made; but Lord Rillingdon's house, Northcot Hall, was near, and the young people were permitted to improve their acquaintance into intimacy, and so an unavowed attachment was formed. The crash came, and Lord Rillingdon withdrew his son, Mr. Jennings, from the perilous neighbourhood.

A year elapsed before the exact state of Mr. Grey's affairs was ascertained. During that time Richard Marston, who had seen and admired Laura Grey, whose brother was an intimate friend of his, came to the neighbourhood and endeavoured to insinuate himself into her good graces. He had soon learned her ruined circumstances, and founded the cruellest hopes upon this melancholy knowledge.

To forward his plans he had conveyed scandalous falsehoods to Mr. Jennings with the object of putting an end to his rivalry. These he had refused to believe; but there were others no less calculated to excite his jealousy, and to alienate his affection. He had shown the effect of this latter influence by a momentary coldness, which roused Laura Grey's fiery spirit; for gentle as she was, she was proud.

She had written to tell Mr. Jennings that all was over between them, and that she would never see him more. He had replied in a letter, which did not reach her till long after, in terms the most passionate and agonising, vowing that he held himself affianced to her while he lived, and would never marry any one but her.

In this state of things Miss Grey had come to us, resolved to support herself by her own exertions.

Lord Rillingdon, having reason to suspect his son's continued attachment to Laura Grey, and having learned accidentally that there was a lady of that name residing at Malory, made a visit to Cardyllion. He was the old gentleman in the chocolate-coloured coat, who had met us as we returned from church, and held a conversation with her, under the trees, on the Mill-road.

His object was to exact a promise that she would hold no communication with his son for the future. His tone was insolent, dictatorial, and in the highest degree irritating. She repelled his insinuations with spirit, and peremptorily refused to make any reply whatever to demands urged in a temper so arrogant and insulting.

The result was that he parted from her highly incensed, and without having carried his point, leaving my dear sister and myself in a fever of curiosity.

Richard Rokestone Marston was the only near relation of Sir Harry Rokestone. He had fallen under the baronet's just and high displeasure. After a course of wild and wicked extravagance he had finally ruined himself in the opinion of Sir Harry, by committing a fraud, which, indeed, would never have come to light had it not been for a combination of unlucky chances.

In consequence of this his uncle refused to see him; but at Mr. Blount's intercession agreed to allow him a small annual sum, on the strict condition that he was to leave England. It was when actually on his way to London, which, for a reason of his own, he chose to reach through Bristol, that he had so nearly lost his life in the disaster of the Conway Castle.

Here was the first contact of my story with his.

His short stay at Malory was signalled by his then unaccountable suit to me, and by his collision with Mr. Jennings, who had come down there on some very vague information that Laura Grey was in the neighbourhood. He had succeeded in meeting her, and in renewing their engagement, and at last in persuading her to consent to a secret marriage, which at first involved the anguish of a long separation, during which a dangerous illness threatened the life of her husband.

I am hurrying through this explanation, but I must relate a few more events and circumstances, which throw a light upon some of the passages in the history I have been giving you of my life.

Why did Richard Marston conceive the fixed purpose of marrying a girl, of whom he knew enough to be aware that she was without that which prudence would have insisted on as a first necessity in his circumstances—money?

Well, it turned out to have been by no means so imprudent a plan. I learned from Mr. Blount the particulars that explained it.

Mr. Blount, who took an interest in him, and had always cherished a belief that he was reclaimable, told him repeatedly that Sir Harry had often said that he would take one of Mabel Ware's daughters for his heiress. This threat he had secretly laughed at, knowing the hostility that subsisted between the families. He was, however, startled at last. Mr. Blount had showed him a letter in which Sir Harry distinctly stated that he had made up his mind to leave everything he possessed to me. This he showed him for the purpose

of inducing a patient endeavour to regain his lost place in the old man's regard. It effectually alarmed Richard Marston; and the idea of disarming that urgent danger, and restoring himself to his lost position by this stroke of strategy, occurred to him, and instantly bore fruit in action.

After his return, and admission as an inmate at Dorracleugh, the danger appeared still more urgent, and his opportunities were endless.

He had succeeded, as I have told you, in binding me by an engagement. In that position he was safe, no matter what turned up. He had, however, now made his election; and how cruelly, you already know.

Did he, according to his low standard, love me? I believe, so far as was consistent with his nature, he did. He was furious at my having escaped him, and would have pursued and no doubt discovered me, had he been free to leave Dorracleugh.

His alleged marriage was, I believe, a fiction. Mr. Blount thought that he had, perhaps, formed some schemes for a marriage of ambition, in favour of which I was to have been put aside. If so, however, I do not think that he would have purchased the enjoyment of such ambition, at the price of losing me, at once and for ever. I dare say you will laugh at the simplicity of a woman's vanity, who in such a case could suppose such a thing. I do suppose it, notwithstanding. I am sure that so far as his nature was capable of love, he did love me. With the sad evidences of this my faith, I will not weary you. Let those vain conclusions rest where they are, deep in my heart.

The important post which Lord Rillingdon had filled, in one of our greatest dependencies, and the skill, courage, and wisdom with which he had directed affairs during a very critical period, had opened a way for him to still higher things. He and Laura were going out in about six months to India; and she and he insisted that I should accompany them as their guest. Too delightful this would have been under happier circumstances; but the sense of dependence, however disguised, is dreadful. We are so constructed that it is for an average mind more painful to share in idle dependence the stalled ox of a friend, than to work for one's own dinner of herbs.

They were going to Brighton, and I consented to make them a visit there of three or four weeks; after that I was to resume my search for a "situation." Laura

entreated me at least to accept the care of her little child; but this, too, I resolutely declined. At first sight you will charge me with folly; but if you, being of my sex, will place yourself for a moment in my situation, you will understand why I refused. I felt that I should have been worse than useless. Laura would never have watched me, as a good mother would like to watch the person in charge of her only child. She would have been embarrassed, and unhappy, and I should have been conscious of being in the way. Two other circumstances need explanation. Laura told me, long after, that she had received a farewell letter from Mr. Carmel, who told her that he had written to warn me, but with much precaution, as Sir Harry had a strong antipathy to persons of his profession, of a danger which he was not then permitted to define. Monsieur Droquille, whom Mr. Marston had courted, and sought to draw into relations with him, had received a letter from that young man, stating that he had made up his mind to leave America by the next ship, and establish himself once more at Dorraclough. It was Mr. Carmel, then, who had written the note that puzzled me so much, and conveyed it, by another hand, to the post-office of Cardyllion.

Monsieur Droquille had no confidence in Richard Marston. He had been informed, beside, of the exact nature of Sir Harry's will, and a provision that made his bequest to me void, in case I should embrace the Roman Catholic faith.

It is to that provision in the draft-will of Sir Harry Rokestone, and to the impolicy of any action while Lady Lorrimer's death was so recent, and my indignation so hot, that Droquille had resolved that, for a time, at least, the attempt to gain me to the Church of Rome should not be renewed.

I have now ended my necessary chapter of explanation, and my story again goes on its way.

#### CHAPTER LXVIII. AT THE FUNERAL.

A SOLEMN low-voiced fuss was going on in the old house at Dorraclough; preparations and consultations were afoot; a great deal was not being done, but there were the whispering and restlessness of expectation, and the few grisly arrangements for the reception of the confined guest.

Old Mrs. Shackleton, the housekeeper, crept about the rooms, her handkerchief now and then to her eyes; and the housemaid-in-chief, with her attendant women, were gliding about.

Sir Harry had, years before, left a letter in Mr. Blount's hands that there might be no delay in searching for a will directing all that concerned his funeral.

The coffin was to be placed in the great hall of the house, according to ancient custom, on tressels, under the broad span of the chimney. He was to be followed to the grave by his tenantry, and such of the gentry, his neighbours, as might please to attend. There was to be an ample repast for all comers, consisting of as much "meat and drink of the best as they could consume;" what remained was to be distributed among the poor in the evening.

He was to be laid in the family vault adjoining the church of Golden Friars; a stone with the family arms, and a short inscription, "but no flatteries," was to be set up in the church, on the south wall next the vault, and near the other family monuments, and it was to mention that he died unmarried, and was the last of the old name of Rokestone, of Dorraclough.

The funeral was to proceed to Golden Friars, not by the "mere road," but, as in the case of other family funerals, from Dorraclough to Golden Friars, by the old high road.

If he should die at home, at Dorraclough, but not otherwise, he was to be "waked" in the same manner as his father and his grandfather were.

There were other directions, presents to the sexton and parish clerk, and details that would weary you.

At about twelve o'clock the hearse arrived, and, two or three minutes after, Mr. Blount drove up in a chaise.

The almost gigantic coffin was carried up the steps, and placed under the broad canopy assigned to it at the upper end of the hall.

Mr. Blount, having given a few directions, inquired for Mr. Marston, and found that gentleman in the drawing-room.

He came forward; he did not intend it, but there was something in the gracious and stately melancholy of his reception, which seemed to indicate not only the chief-mourner, but the master of the house.

"Altered circumstances—a great change," said Mr. Marston, taking his hand. "Many will feel his death deeply. He was to me, I have said it a thousand times, the best friend that ever man had."

"Yes, yes, sir; he did show wonderful patience and forbearance with you, considering his temper, which was proud and fiery, you know; poor gentleman, poor Sir

Harry; but grandly generous, sir, grandly generous."

"It is a consolation to me, having lost a friend and, I may say, a father, who was, in patience, forbearance, and generosity, all you describe, and all you know, that we were lately, thanks, my good friend, mainly to your kind offices, upon the happiest terms. He used to talk to me about that farm; he took such an interest in it—sit down, pray—won't you have some sherry and a biscuit?—and such a growing interest in me."

"I think he really was coming gradually not to think quite so ill of you as he did," said good Mr. Blount. "No sherry, no biscuit, thank you. I know, sir, that under great and sudden temptation a man may do the thing he ought not to have done, and repent from his heart afterwards, and from very horror of his one great lapse, may walk, all the rest of his life, not only more discreetly, but more safely than a man who has never slipped at all. But Sir Harry was sensitive and fiery. He had thought that you were to represent the old house, and perhaps to bear the name after his death, and could not bear that both should be slurred by, if I may be allowed the expression, a shabby crime."

"Once for all, Mr. Blount, you'll be good enough to remember that such language is offensive and intolerable," interrupted Richard Marston, firmly and sharply. "My uncle had a right to lecture me on the subject—you can have none."

"Except as a friend," said Mr. Blount. "I shall, however, for the future, observe your wishes upon that subject. You got my letter about the funeral, I see?"

"Yes, they are doing everything exactly as you said," said Marston, recovering his affability.

"Here is the letter," said Mr. Blount. "You should run your eye over it."

"Ha! It is dated a long time ago," said Mr. Marston. "It was no sudden presentiment, then. How well he looked when I was leaving this!"

"We are always astonished when death gives no warning," said Mr. Blount; "it hardly ever does to the person most interested. Doctors, friends, they themselves, are all in a conspiracy to conceal the thief who has got into the bedroom. It matters very little that the survivors have had warning."

Marston shook his head and shrugged.

"Some day I must learn prudence," said he.

"Let it be the true prudence," said Mr. Blount. "It is a short foresight that sees no further than the boundary of this life."

Mr. Marston opened the letter, and the old gentleman left him to see after the preparations.

Some one at Golden Friars, I think it was the vicar, sent me the country paper, with a whole column in mourning, with a deep, black edge, giving a full account of the funeral of Sir Harry Rokestone, of Dorracleugh. The ancient family whose name he bore, was now extinct. I saw in the list the names of county people who had come in their carriages more than twenty miles to attend the funeral, and people who had come by rail hundreds of miles. It was a great county gathering that followed the last of the Rokestones, of Dorracleugh, to the grave.

### THE LAST BATTLE FOR SAMARCAND.

"THAT'S the spoil of the infidel, my father; and he who handled it was a brave man, unbeliever though he was. God has put much bravery in the hearts of the Basurmani (heathens); but we have beaten them, after all!"

So speaks, with a gleam of stern pleasure in his clear grey eye, a stalwart Russian grenadier, whose close-cropped hair is just beginning to turn grey. Emerging from the great mosque of Tashkent (now turned into a powder-magazine by the practical conquerors), I find the veteran munching his ration bread in the shadow of a projecting gateway. The unmistakably Bokhariote yataghan in his belt provokes my curiosity, which he is evidently nothing loth to gratify.

"We have beaten them," he repeats, twisting his huge red moustache; "but we'll have to do it all over again some day. These fellows are like our wolves in winter—never quiet till their skins are hung up behind the stove. They've got to go out some day, anyhow; for it's not to be borne that all the best bits of God's earth should be in the hands of unbelieving heathens!"

"You took this yataghan in battle, then, I suppose?" interpolate I.

"That did I, father, and a hard battle it was. They tell me that the story of it has gone abroad even to the West; but, perhaps, you haven't heard it."

"And if I have, a good story's always



worth hearing twice; so I'll just tell you what we'll do. We'll step across into that kabak (tavern) on the other side of the street, and you shall wash the dust out of your mouth, and tell me all about it."

Honest Dmitri's small eyes twinkle approvingly, and he follows me across the street with alacrity. A full measure of liquor is speedily set before him, and sitting down in the shadow of the doorway, he pulls off his cap, crosses himself devoutly, and prepares to enjoy himself. The removal of the cap shows me a long, dark-red scar across his forehead, standing out strongly upon the sun-burned skin.

"Hallo, brother! the unbelievers have left you a remembrance, I see. Did you get that in the battle you were talking of?"

"Just so, master; and from this very yataghan that I have been showing you. The Basurmani can hit hard when they like, I can tell you; and if this Khiva expedition that everybody's talking about here, really comes off, we shall find our porridge hot for us—that we shall! But we'll beat them all the same, please God!"

"Well, but about this battle of yours?"

"Ah, to be sure! Well, you see, in the year '67 it was settled to take Samarcand at any price, and General Kaufmann was our leader. But what a march we had of it! You've seen something of the mud on your way here, I take it—well, that was just how we had it all the way to the Kouran-Tau ridge. Plump you go into the dirt up to your knees, and get all slimy and sticky, like a fly in a pot of milk; then comes a stream, and you get over it anyhow, keeping only your musket and ammunition dry. Then into a lot of thorn-bushes, that stick into you like bayonets; and then more dirt after that, till you're just like a newly-tarred boot. Oh, fathers of the world! what work we did have of it!"

Dmitri breaks off for a moment to drown the horrible recollection in a tremendous swig of raw spirit; while the landlord, foreseeing that the yarn will require a good deal of moistening, nods his head approvingly.

"After we got over the Kouran-Tau," continues my extempore Othello, "we came out upon the steppe, and there the ground was hard and rocky, and we had better walking of it; but as for the heat, phew! All day we'd be baking like loaves in an oven; and then the sun would set all at once, as if somebody had blown him out,

and it would turn cold all in a minute, and down would come the dew, and we would all be shivering and shaking like a dog shut out on a winter night; and then after that the heat again. We didn't much like it, I can tell you; but what's to be done? When a thing is to be it will be. Besides, our colonel was one of the right sort, that he was. Many a time would he get off his horse, and march three or four versts along with the column, just to show that he didn't want to be better off than the rest of us; and when he saw a man beginning to tire, and to drag his feet after him, he would call out cheerily, 'Keep up, my lad; think what your lass at home would say, if she saw her man the first to fall out.' And that would go through us like a sup of vodka, and we'd go forward as briskly as if we had only just started.

"At last we got to Khodjent; a sweet little place it is, nestled in its forest like a baby among the standing corn in harvest time, and its mosques glittering over the river like cavalry helmets, and there we halted a day to rest. It was there we got word that the heathen had come out to meet us, and at that we rejoiced greatly, and said we would give them Adjar\* over again. But the spiteful beasts hadn't the civility to stand out and give us a fair chance at 'em; all they did was to hang about us, cutting off our stragglers, and trying to draw us out in pursuit, that they might fall upon us scattered—the cowardly, sneaking, accursed sons of dogs." (Here Dmitri, warming with his subject, branches off into a string of curses worthy of Erulphus and Œdipus Coloneus.) "But our father, the general, was too old a wolf to be caught in that trap; he kept us well together, and gave the heathen dogs no chance. All they could do was to hover about us as we marched, just as the crows used to do round me when I went ploughing at home, and perhaps one of them would ride past at full gallop within easy rifle range, and take a flying shot in passing. But our Cossacks knew that game as well they did, and gave 'em pepper to their soup till they had enough. Once or twice they tried to surprise us by night, but our general always slept with his eyes open, and so 'the scythe came upon a stone'† every time they tried it, and after a bit they thought it better to leave us alone. Here, landlord, another half-pint."

\* A battle gained by General Romanovski in 1866.

† A Russian proverb, answering to our phrase of "catching a Tartar."

Dmitri's narrative is again interrupted for a few seconds, the landlord surveying him meanwhile with an air of fatherly admiration.

"Now, I should tell you," he resumes at length, "that my great chum in our company was one Nikolai Petrovitch Masloff, from the town of Khvalinsk, on the Volga. Such a merry fellow as he was! always laughing and joking, and telling funny stories; and with his tales, and his songs, and his jokes, he kept us all as merry as boys at a carnival. But the morning after we got to Ouran-Toubeh, which is about half-way from Khodjent to Samarcand, I noticed that Kolia (Nikolai), instead of looking bright and jolly as he generally did, was as dumpish as a peasant who has just been drawn for the conscription—and well he might! Did you ever have a dream, master?"

His voice sinks to a whisper at the question; and a sudden look of solemnity, almost amounting to awe, darkens his jovial face.

"A dream, eh?" answer I, laughing; "why, I'm always having them. I had a very queer one last night, after supping on mutton-pilaff and green tea."

"Ah! I don't mean that sort; this was quite a different thing. Listen, and you shall hear. I had expected to find Kolia jollier than ever, for our general had just got word that the unbelievers were encamped with a great army in front of Samarcand, meaning to fight; and we were all rejoicing at it; but when I looked into Kolia's face, it struck upon me like a chill.

"Why, brother," said I, "what's wrong with you? It's just the time to be jolly, when we're going to square accounts with the unbelievers; and here you're looking as if you'd met the Domovoi' (the Russian Puck).

"Meetya (Dmitri) my lad," says he, "take this little cross of mine, and swear upon it that you'll give it with your own hands to my father, Petr Ivanitch Masloff, at Khvalinsk. You will return to Holy Russia some day; but as for me, it is fated that I should leave my bones here—I have had a dream."

"At that word, master, I felt colder than ever, for I knew that Kolia was a 'znacharr' (fortune-teller), and that his dream could not lie. I said nothing, and he went on:

"I dreamed that we were lying on the bank of a swollen river, beyond which were steep hills; and on those hills lay the army

of the unbelievers; and in the middle of all there rose up one big rock, like the face of a man. And suddenly, like a rising mist, came the figure of my patron saint, Saint Nicholas, right up to where we two lay; and he stooped down and touched you on the forehead—but drew back his hand directly as if he had made a mistake, and laid it on my neck; and it was cold as ice. Then he disappeared; and as I awoke, I heard a strain of music just like a Panikheeda (funeral hymn)."

"Just then came the signal to fall in, and we had no more talk till the evening before the battle. We had been marching all day over a great plain overgrown with wooding, but just about sunset we came out upon the bank of the Zar-Afshan, and saw what was in store for us. The river was in full flood, running like the Volga after a spring thaw, and above it the heights of Tchepan-Atin rose up like a wall, steep and dark against the sky, and, scattered all over the slope, like sugar on an Easter cake, were helmets, and spearheads, and gun-barrels, and embroidered dresses, and all the array of the heathen host, and their guns were pointed right down upon the river, all ready to pepper us if we tried to cross. I was just looking up at them when I felt a hand on my arm, and heard Nikolai's voice saying, 'Look; do you remember?'

"I looked, and it was as if some one had struck me on the face, for there, as he had seen them in his dream, were the steep hills, and the swollen river, and the array of the heathen army, and the big rock, like a man's face, and all! Then I set my teeth hard, for I knew that he must die; but he just took off his little cross, and gave it me, saying only, 'Remember your promise.' We gripped each other's hands, and said nothing more.

"The next morning, in the grey of the early dawn, we mustered for the assault, for the general had taken a good look at their position, and had decided to try it on the right, where the ridge was not so steep. My regiment was to lead, and the colonel stepped to the front, and said, in his old cheery way, looking as jolly as if he were just going to dinner, 'My lads, our father the general has ordered us to carry that position, and so, of course, we can do it. Forward!'

"The next moment we were breast-deep in the river, holding our pieces over our heads. The minute we leaped in the batteries opened upon us, and all over the

hills it was flash, bang, flash, bang, like a thunderstorm, and the water splashing and foaming under the shot, as if under hail; but God blinded the eyes of the idolators, so that only a few of us got hit. We struggled through, and charged up the heights; and, to look at us and them, you'd have thought they had only to open their mouths and swallow us whole. But the heathen have not the strong heart of the true believers; and when they saw us coming right at them, as if we were sure of winning, their courage failed them. The whole army broke up all of a sudden, as the ice on the Volga breaks up in spring, and they threw down their arms and fled. Some of them stood to it, though, in the foremost battery; and among them was a tall fellow in a gay dress, who must have been a chief. Then I said to myself, 'I'll kill that man!' and I ran right at him. He gave me a slash with his yataghan (this one that's in my belt now), and cut through my cap into my forehead; but my bayonet went right through him, up to the very shank. We both fell down together, and I thought the game was done.

"When I awoke again all was quiet, and I staggered to my feet, and bound up my hurt with a strip of the Bokhariote's dress. He was dead and stiff, and I turned him gently over on his face, and prayed that his soul might find mercy, for he was a brave man. But when I turned to go there lay poor Nikolai, stark dead, with his neck half cut through by a sword-stroke, just as the dream had said. I have his little cross still" (he held it out to me in his broad hand, brown and hard as a trencher), "and if I ever get back to Holy Russia I'll give it to his father at Khvalinsk, though I should walk barefoot all the way.

"So there, master, is your story; and if you don't believe it, why, here's the very scar in my forehead still, just where the saint touched it. There now!"

### OLD SEA LAWS.

ANY subject connected with the sea must be a matter of interest to England, who owes so much of her wealth, power, and national character to her maritime pursuits.

But although England has now, for a long time, been the acknowledged mistress of the sea, yet she was late in coming to the front; other nations there are who, in past ages, were her superiors in naval power,

but the greatness that they then enjoyed will bear no comparison with her present world-wide supremacy.

Holland, Spain, Genoa, and Venice, have all had their day; they have been great traders and great sea-warriors, and not only, for the time, ruled there in action, but have, especially the three last, contributed a great deal to the theory and principles of maritime law, by compiling and publishing sea codes which are monuments of practical common sense and equitable legislation.

The object of this paper is to give a very brief historical sketch of one or two of these, and then to draw the attention of the reader, a little more in detail, to the provisions of one, the most important of them, the celebrated *Consulado del Mar* of Barcelona.

In the very earliest times law seems to have ended with the sea-shore, just as in the eighteenth century it ended with the Highland line. Gentlemen, therefore, who were bold enough to venture on the sea, were considered to have emancipated themselves from all law except what their own will or interest might suggest.

Thus we are told in the third book of the *Odyssey*, that when *Telemachus* arrives at *Pylos* by sea, after he has shared the banquet of the *Pylans*, *Nestor* asks him whether he is voyaging with any fixed object, or merely roving over the sea as a pirate bent on indiscriminate mischief, and there is not the slightest hint that his reply would in any degree affect the kind of welcome accorded to him.

That a hospitable reception should be given to a rover may seem strange, though the countrymen of *Drake*, *Frobisher*, and *Hawkins* can hardly feel much surprise at the existence and recognition of a trade that was followed with very little disguise even in the days of good *Queen Bess*. By degrees, however, as time went on, the value of lawful trading was recognised as a means of gain even more successful than piracy, and the necessity for some, at any rate elementary maritime laws, became inevitable.

The *Rhodians* are the earliest sea lawyers of whose legal labours any result has come down to us. They traded chiefly to the ports of the *Mediterranean*, though their commercial enterprise led them into the *Adriatic*, and even into the *Black Sea*.

Their code of sea laws was compiled with great judgment, and its intrinsic value may be estimated from two facts; first,

that it was adopted by the Romans after the failure of their naval expedition in the first Punic war; and, second, that one particular statute, the *Lex Rhodia de jactio*, was inserted by the Emperor Justinian in the *Digest*, &c., remains an authority in cases of jettison, and is appealed to by modern lawyers even at the present time.

It is remarkable that Rome, the great lawgiver to the world, so far as the land is concerned, yet contributed nothing to the law of the sea, but contented herself with adopting the laws of the Rhodians. The reason, doubtless, is that the Romans in their hearts despised and actually discouraged commerce and trade, and even prohibited it to the equestrian order. Witness the famous law brought in by the Consul Flaminius, and mentioned by Livy, forbidding any senator to possess a ship capable of carrying more than a certain very limited cargo of corn. The value and dignity of a ship of war was recognised; but almost the only idea the Romans had of a merchant ship was to bring corn from the East, for the huge and sometimes starving population of the city.

The Rhodian laws, therefore, maintained their place as the great sea code of the ancients, appealed to by every maritime nation in questions concerning the sea.

Many circumstances prevented the development of commerce till long after the Christian era, and it was not until the twelfth century that any need seems to have been felt for a recognised body of laws, especially applicable to maritime questions.

The first of these seems to have been that known by the title of the *Laws of Oleron*, said to have been compiled by order of Leonora, Duchess of Guienne, about the year 1192. Some authorities, more particularly Selden, have claimed for her son Richard Cœur de Lion this honour; but the Spanish historian, Capmany, energetically contests this claim, though he is compelled to admit that Richard did introduce them into England, and even made upon them some emendations of his own, which may have given rise to the opinion that he was their original author.

Next, in 1280, came the celebrated *Consolado del Mar* of Barcelona.

About the same time, or rather later, that is in or near the year 1288, there was recognised by the northern nations a code of sea laws, known as the *Ordinances which the Merchants and Captains of Ships* formed anciently in the magnificent city

of Wisbuy. The city of Wisbuy, in the island of Gothlandia, in the Baltic, was at this date a great trading centre for the north, and the code of sea laws there promulgated took the same place amongst the nations of the north, as did the *Consolado del Mar* amongst those of the south.

One other body of sea laws must be mentioned before recurring to that one with which this paper is especially concerned.

In 1252, the cities of Lubeck, Dantzic, Brunswick, and Cologne, gave a beginning to the celebrated confederacy of the *Hanse Towns*. At that time the great cities were the chief pioneers of constitutional liberty and commercial enterprise, and they early found that in order to assert their own independence, and to carry out successfully their trading ventures, they must combine to compel something like fair terms from their feudal suzerains; since these were wont to make trade impossible by their absurd restrictions, or unprofitable by their unjust exactions.

With this object, therefore, the famous *Hanseatic League* was initiated by the towns just mentioned, and the scheme was so successful and popular, that the allied cities soon numbered seventy or eighty in all parts of Europe, from Novgorod in Muscovy, to Antwerp in Flanders. With a view to still greater security the cities of the league put themselves under the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order, and so great was the power and success of this formidable confederation, that even sovereigns sought the dignity of directors of the *Hanse*.

Towards the end of the fourteenth century, when the league was at the zenith of its power, it actually declared war with Waldemar, King of Denmark, and in 1420 against Henry the Fifth of England, and sent against him a fleet of forty ships, carrying twelve thousand men, besides seamen.

This proof of the strength and courage of the league aroused the fear and hate of the sovereigns in whose dominions the *Hanse Towns* were situated, who therefore required every merchant amongst their subjects to withdraw from the confederation. By this means this great combination was, by degrees, reduced to those cities alone by whom it had been formed, and, in 1791, it consisted of Lubeck, Bremen, Cologne, Dantzic, Brunswick, Hamburg, and Rostock.

Lubeck was considered the seat of the *Hanse*, and in that city were promulgated those sea laws which the extensive shipping



of the associated cities rendered necessary, but which must be refused the merit of absolute originality, since many of their provisions were certainly taken from the Book of the Consolado del Mar.

It may seem somewhat strange that in this enumeration of these early compilers of maritime laws, the name of England is hardly mentioned, except in connexion with the claim made for Richard the First to be the author of the Laws of Oleron. Yet it was not that she was without a navy, or had not begun to assert herself in her own neighbourhood, for Lingard tells us that Edward the Third made it his boast that his predecessors had always possessed the seas between England and France; and in the parliamentary rolls of this king's reign, the Commons declare in quaint Norman French that, "*La navie estoit si noble et si plentinueuse, que tous les pays tenoient Notre Seigneur pour le Roy de la mer.*"

It may be that the difficulty or impossibility of very distant navigation, combined with a state of incessant hostility with France, compelled England to confine her attention to the Channel and the sea in her own immediate neighbourhood. Moreover, her trade was not very extensive, for the spirit of commercial enterprise had not then been aroused within her, and what trade there was, even down to the time of Queen Elizabeth, was chiefly carried on by the merchants of the Hanse. The necessity therefore for maritime legislation, felt by some of the continental nations, seems to have touched her very little indeed.

At this time the genial waters of the Mediterranean sea offered to the numerous population of its extended coasts opportunities of navigation and trade far beyond what could then be found elsewhere in the world. Nature, therefore, united with historical tradition and natural capacity in developing in them a spirit of mercantile and maritime enterprise. Thus, the three great maritime powers of the time of which we are speaking, were a couple of Italian republics, and a small Spanish kingdom, Genoa, Venice, and Arragon.

Of these it might have been doubted for a time which should be called the first, Genoa and Venice being so nearly matched, so enterprising and so determined. But the Queen of the Adriatic remained queen of the sea after almost a century of conflict. For eighty years after 1263, an historian remarks, the internecine struggle between the two republics convulsed southern

Europe. Between 1264 and 1272 they fought no fewer than five most sanguinary pitched naval battles, besides innumerable lesser encounters. At last, however, the bloody struggle at Chiozza left both completely exhausted in men, ships, and money. Venice rose rapidly from the effects of the war, for she had been the victor, but Genoa never regained her former proud position.

Throughout these contests for supremacy at sea, we meet the names Catalans and Arragonese, mostly as allied with Venice, and greatly promoting her ultimate success. These people constituted the third great naval power of that period, and as it is with the naval code constructed by them that this paper is chiefly concerned, we will glance for a moment at their position.

Catalonia, with a Mediterranean seaboard of about one hundred and eighty miles, had contained two celebrated maritime cities: the one, Tarragona, founded by the Phœnicians, and destroyed by the Moors about 710, A.D., the other, Barcelona, founded, B.C. 235, by Hannibal's father, Hammilcar Barca, the Carthaginian, and the great emporium of trade at the time of which we are speaking. It had a ruler of its own, certainly, from A.D. 870. A sovereign count of Barcelona, who governed Catalonia, and the twelfth descendant of this early potentate, in the year 1137, united, by marriage, the kingdom of Arragon to his own dominions. Catalans and Arragonese, therefore, during the wars of Genoa and Venice in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, were alike the subjects of the kings of Arragon. Majorca and its sister islands he had also acquired in a very questionable manner, whilst Valentia had been taken from the Moors by a king of Arragon in 1239.

These constituted his home dominions, whilst the constant presence, and the prowess of his well-appointed fleets in the Mediterranean, gave him, for a time, the possession of Sicily.

This being the state of these powers, it was natural that they should early feel the want of some settled code of maritime laws to decide disputes that would inevitably arise in the course of the very considerable foreign trade that they carried on, extending to the Bosphorus, and even to the stormy waters of the Black Sea, and, of course, including the nearer ports of the Mediterranean and Adriatic.

In consequence of this want the Book of

the Consolado del Mar of Barcelona was drawn up, and became the text-book of sea law for the maritime nations of southern Europe.

This code, admirably adapted for its purpose, and suitable for its time, at once comprehensive and minute, dealing with large and important mercantile questions, and also with the smallest details, even as to the food of the seamen, was not constructed upon abstract principles, but was to a very large extent case-made law.

A century before its compilation courts had been established in several of the great seaports, such as Genoa, Venice, and Barcelona itself, whose duty and privilege it was to settle disputes which arose in course of trade. These courts were called consulates of the sea; and decided, in an equitable manner, all cases brought before them. They were composed of two or three consuls, and a judge of appeals with two assessors, all of whom, judge, consuls, and assessors, were taken from the merchant class. Professional lawyers were not encouraged; in none of these courts were they necessary, and in some they were absolutely prohibited.

The formalities to be observed at the election of the judges are thus described in the Book of the Consolado del Mar of Barcelona, referring to the customs of Valentia. "It is the custom every year, on the day of the birth of our Lord, and at the hour of vespers, for all worthy navigators, masters of ships, mariners, &c., or a goodly number of them, to meet together in our city of Valentia, and then to elect, not by lot, but by choice, two good men of the art of the sea, and not of any other business or art whatsoever, to be their consuls, and a third, of the same profession, to act as judge."

Each court had its official seal; that of Barcelona was ordered to be round with a shield upon it: "whereof two parts shall bear the royal arms of Arragon, and one part certain waves of the sea."

It was from the decisions of the court of the important and influential city of Barcelona that the Consolado del Mar was compiled.

Perhaps of all the mercantile cities of Europe, none gave itself up more completely to commerce than did this. Ford, in his account of it, says, "It divided with Italy the enriching commerce of the East, and trade was never held to be a degradation, as among the Castilians; accordingly heraldic decorations are much less frequent

on the houses; the merchant's mark was preferred to the armorial charge." The body of laws compiled from the maritime court of so business-loving a city is as practical and far-seeing as might be expected; but it is more, it is also extremely fair, treating the rights of all parties, owners, merchants, and common sailors, with the utmost justice and impartiality. Indeed, the legal position of a simple seaman of those days was, judging from the laws directly affecting him, much preferable to what it sometimes is at present, when a merchant captain may be, almost with impunity, an intolerable tyrant.

From some of the provisions in the book before us we learn that ships were built and owned in shares of sixty-fourth parts, a plan which we seem to have adopted from them, for at the present time we hold a ship to be technically composed of sixty-four sixty-fourths.

One person called the patron, who was usually the chief owner, seems to have had the general management and responsibility both of the building of the ship and of her trading when built. He arranged the freights with the merchants, he chartered the ship if she were on hire, he engaged and paid the crew; he, in short, had the general responsible government and direction of the ship, and all belonging to her. But he did not necessarily navigate her; that was the work of the sailing-master; yet the patron, when at sea, could draw the same pay and rations as the sailing-master if he took an active part in the navigation. Every one in the ship, including the sailors, had a right, according to his rank, to a space for a small parcel of private goods, with which to trade on his own account, and the most minute regulations are made as to the proportion these shares are to contribute in case of any having to be sacrificed for the safety of the ship.

Amongst the regulations as to shipping goods, and the responsibility of the patron for their security, is one very singular provision. If any goods have been injured by rats during the voyage, the patron shall be compelled to pay their value if he had sailed without any cats on board. But if he had been careful to provide cats, and these had died on the voyage, and it could be shown that the rats had done the mischief or the disappearance of their natural enemies, the patron shall be held free of responsibility. On the other hand, if he had called at any port where cats were to be had, after the death of his own

stock, and had not procured any, then the damage done to the goods fell on him. The patron had authority to inflict punishment upon all on board, in some cases even capital; but under very strict and salutary regulations, which, while they gave him all the power necessary for the government of the ship, yet prevented him from using it in an arbitrary or tyrannical manner.

There is provided what might be called a sort of sanctuary, to which a sailor may run, and where he may defend himself if attacked, even by the patron; the provision is as follows: "If any patron shall use insulting language to one of his men, and shall rush upon him to attack him, the sailor shall flee away towards the prow of the ship, out of the reach of the patron, and if he follows him, the sailor must pass across the chain, and if the patron still follows and attacks him there, the sailor shall call upon the rest of the crew to witness that the patron has passed the chain, and he may then defend himself." The chain was drawn across the extreme forward part of the deck apparently for the very purpose here described. To us, who are accustomed to consider a sea captain an absolute despot on board his ship, this seems a most strange enactment; but it would appear that the seamen who manned these ships were a superior class of men, who every one of them had a venture in the ship, and who probably were citizens of Barcelona or Venice, as the case might be.

Yet, as has been said, power to inflict severe punishment was not denied to patrons of ships when it was necessary. Don Pedro the Third, of Arragon, promulgated certain decrees in the city of Barcelona in the year 1343, one of which ordered any cross-bowman who should cut the cable of the ship, turn the helm, or go on shore without leave, to be hanged by the neck; and another condemned any sailor or cross-bowman who, after agreeing to serve in the ship, shall fly either from fear of armed men, or of the enemy, or of bad weather, to the same punishment.

Again, in the case of the pilot, of course a most important person, it is enacted that if he undertakes to direct the ship's course to any place, the agreement having been entered in the ship's book, and if, when the ship arrives off the coast, the pilot is found to be ignorant of it, he is to lose his head instantly (*encontinente*) without any remission or grace whatsoever. But this sentence must be approved by the whole ship's company, who are to be summoned,

merchants and seamen, and to decide by a majority.

The patron must hold this council, says the law, "because he might have ill will at the pilot, or might wish to succeed to his forfeited goods; moreover, some patrons know not the prow of the ship from the poop, nor what the sea is, and, therefore, are not fit to judge." A passage which shows that the patron was not always a sailor.

Every agreement or contract, concerning the ship, crew, or cargo, had to be entered in the ship's book or protocol, which was under the charge of a special officer, called the clerk or scribe. This book appears to have been very comprehensive in its character; it contained the ship's articles, signed by every one on board, the contracts for freight, the log, the account for ship's stores and men's wages—in fact everything that required to be reduced to writing.

The clerk who kept this book, a highly responsible officer, seems to have united the duties of supercargo, ship's husband, and purser in his own person. He was required to swear to the patron that he would keep the book honestly, never sleep on shore without taking with him the keys of the ship's chest in which it was kept, and never leave it open when on board. If he failed in any of these particulars he was liable to lose his right hand. So jealously was this office watched that no patron could appoint a relation to it without consent of the merchants and co-owners, and no person who had ever been convicted of dishonesty could be appointed under any circumstances whatever.

Very sensible and careful provision is made concerning the food of the sailors. The patron was bound to find flesh for them on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday, and soup or pottage, literally spoon-meat, on other days. Wine was provided three days in the morning, and three days in the evening, evidently none was to be served out on Friday; every evening the seamen had a light supper of onions, cheese, sardines, or other fish, in addition to their bread. Wine was apparently considered necessary for health, for if it were very expensive the patron was bound to provide raisins or figs, of which to make a palatable liquid in its place. Double rations were to be served out on all solemn feasts of the Church.

The duties of the mate or sailing-master were discharged by a person called the

"contramaestro." He stowed the cargo, navigated the ship, and generally discharged the duties of executive officer. But if in the course of the voyage he showed himself incompetent, he might be disgraced and sent before the mast, and any sailor on board capable of doing the work could be put in his place. The sailing-master might not take the ship into or out of harbour without consent of the merchants, who, apparently, generally accompanied their goods, but when clear of port he navigated the ship to the best of his knowledge and skill.

The wages of the sailors constituted then, as they do now, a debt upon the ship, which was pledged for them, in the language of the code, to the last nail. Whether the voyage was successful or not, whether the patron had money or not, the seamen's wages must be paid; if he had no money the patron must borrow, and if he could not obtain it by borrowing, he must sell cargo to the amount necessary, and finally, if there was no other resource left, the ship itself must be sold that the wages of the sailors might be paid. Part of the wages appears to have been payable before leaving port; for when the cargo was on board, the sailors could demand from the patron money with which to buy their own venture, who was, moreover, bound to allow the crew six days in which to do so, one-third only of them being permitted to be on shore for this purpose at the same time.

A ship was clearly in those days a sort of republic, in which each person on board had a stake, and in the government of which he consequently had a voice. Yet discipline was very strictly maintained, especially when at sea. A sailor who was insubordinate lost all his pay and his venture, and could be turned out of the ship even at a foreign port.

One curious law, certainly not very conducive to cleanliness, prohibited the sailing-master, so long as in health, and any of the sailors, from taking off their clothes after the ship had sailed. And any sailor who did so was to be ducked overboard at the end of a rope. Flogging was administered for one offence only, the favourite punishment being ducking, from which it might be concluded that the sailors of the south had a strong antipathy to water.

Sentries were posted immediately after the ship had begun her voyage, who were also apparently look-out men; any of these who slept on duty was to lose his wine

and his supper rations. But if such look-out man or sentry slept on duty while in an enemy's waters, he was, if a common sailor, to be flogged by the whole ship's company, or to be ducked in the water three times. If he were a superior sailor he might not be flogged, and he received his ducking by bucketfuls, which were thrown over him, a formidable punishment when we remember that no sailor might take off his clothes, and that they must, therefore, be allowed to dry on his person.

From one of the laws we learn that the merchants of Barcelona had no scruple about trading with the Moors, however they might hate their religion; for it is provided that if a patron should sell the ship in an infidel country, he was bound to hire and provision a coaster, or small ship, in which the sailors might return to a Christian land.

A sailor who fell sick, after signing the ship's book, received half his pay, if his sickness prevented him from making the voyage with the ship; and if he were so ill that he had to be put on shore after the voyage had begun, the patron was compelled to pay him his whole wages, even if he found it necessary to sell some of the goods on board to procure the money.

Careful rules are laid down for avoiding collision in bringing the ship to an anchor in a harbour or roadstead, and for determining on whom the liability for damages should fall in the event of injury being done by one ship to another. Vessels were also bound to assist one another in distress; and punishment is appointed to sailors who shall refuse to go in the boats to render such assistance, on the order of the patron or sailing-master. One of the duties of the seamen was to put the merchants on shore, and the law bade them be ready to wade in the performance of that duty, if necessary.

One part of the book of the Consolado is taken up with rules as to insurance, which show an acquaintance with that important subject quite remarkable in a work of so early a date. Underwriters, however, seem to have been cautious, for no insurance could be effected on a ship going beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, or to the coast of Barbary. In the matter of honesty human nature was then very much what it is now, for it seems to have been necessary to guard against the insuring of ships which the persons trying to insure knew to be already lost.

Rules are laid down with regard to



convoy, by which the patron may secure himself from responsibility, if he and the merchants differ as to the need for that expensive protection. It is curious to observe that we have borrowed certainly one term from those early Spanish traders: the persons whose special work it was to stow the cargo, which was not the duty of the sailors, were called "estibadores;" these same persons, a well-known and highly-paid class at the present time, retain their original Catalan designation, only slightly altered to *stevedores*.

From the description that has been given of this remarkable body of laws, it will be seen that nothing has been overlooked, and the reader is at a loss whether most to admire the sound policy and commercial knowledge shown in the rules regulating such large and important questions as contract, insurance, average, and others of a similar nature; or those smaller, but equally necessary, rules which define and determine the relative rights and duties, and provide for the comfort of all on board that complex polity, a merchant ship of the Middle Ages.

A few words ought perhaps to be added on the subject of the actual book itself containing the sea code, which has just been described.

The *Consolado del Mar* was written in the Catalan dialect. This being a language very little known beyond its native country, has caused most foreign attempts to reproduce the book to be somewhat untrustworthy. Venice produced four separate editions of it in the course of the sixteenth century, one of which, a neat little vellum quarto, has been occasionally referred to throughout the foregoing pages. This edition is not, however, available for very general use, as the Venetian editor appears to have had a very imperfect knowledge of the Catalan language, and as, moreover, he has translated it, not into classical Italian, but has largely introduced his own Venetian. On this account, as he states in his preface, and being very desirous that the *Consolado* should be better known, the Spanish historian, Capmany, produced, in 1792, at Madrid, a beautiful quarto edition, published at the expense of the Royal Junta and Commercial Consulate of Barcelona. A native of Catalonia, and therefore thoroughly acquainted both with the quaint old language of his country, and also with the polished Castilian of Spain, he was peculiarly well fitted for the task which he has so admirably discharged. This edition,

admitted to be the highest authority on the subject, has been chiefly used in the preparation of this paper.

#### PASSION-FLOWER.

THIS verdurous rock is fragrant as of old;  
The marble Psyche stands,  
White gleaming through the green, so still, so cold,  
With tintless tresses falling fold on fold,  
And lightly lifted hands;  
Drooped over by the passion-flower that trails,  
As then it trailed in that far distant year.  
No touch of all the heart-stored picture fails.  
And I—I too am here!

Hush! My heart swelleth. Darling, dost thou know  
How often in my dreams,  
This bosky haunt of thine has risen so,  
The Psyche shining like a thing of snow,  
As there she coldly gleams;  
With lips no lingering sun-ray seems to flush,  
With shyly lowered glance that never lifts;  
Though the still west is all a rosy blush,  
As day to darkness drifts.

Faithless? ah, nay! The passion-blossom lies  
Still near my hungering heart;  
Through all the shadows two love-lighted eyes,  
Blue as Hope's own, like sister stars would rise;  
But we were long apart,  
Long, long! And voiceless distance day by day,  
Stretched sadder and more silently between,  
And ghostly doubtings haunt the lonely way,  
Though memory's glades are green.

And what is earthly love? The prey of years  
Whose soundless foot-falls slay;  
A heart guest driven forth by faithless fears,  
Beguiled by smiles, or overwon by tears.  
How dared I surely say  
The love-fire lighted in a maiden heart,  
In summer hours so few and now so far,  
Would burn as brightly—though we dwelt apart—  
As some self-lighted star?

Loyal I knew thee; but how much of love  
Lives through the eyes alone!  
Honour may hold the heart, but shall not move  
Its slackened chords to music. Though I strove  
To hold thee all mine own,  
What were thy truth without the tenderness,  
That is to truth as fragrance to the rose?  
Forgive the fears that wronged thee! Sorrow's stress  
Draws loyal hearts more close.

I feared to find thee statue-cold, and lo!  
The passion-flower yet blooms.  
No marble maiden greets me; lids of snow  
Veil sunny orbs with such a flame aglow  
As lightens through the glooms  
Of sorrow-darkened years. Oh, heart of gold,  
That such assay finds drossless, spirit fine,  
Love-loyal through long loneliness. Behold,  
The crown of life is thine!

My Psyche, pure as yonder pulseless stone,  
Yet passion-flushed and warm,  
My spring-faced girl-love, now to summer grown,  
Soul-sweet, heart-faithful, fond, and all mine own,  
What spirit doth inform  
Thy winsome womanhood? The statue's grace,  
The blossom's glory, mingle in thy dower;  
For thou art fair, as is the Psyche's face,  
And sweet as is the flower.

The statue stands, a shaft of sunset lights  
Its chill unchanging brow.  
So gleamed it through the dreams of many nights,  
But foolish fear-born fancies, fond affrights,  
All, all are banished now!

Still at my breast the passion-flower lies,  
But now two happy hearts against it beat.  
My rose-flushed Psyche, lift those soul-lit eyes,  
And let our spirits meet!

### MODERN ROMAN MOSAICS.

FROM MONTE MARIO.

WE are on the summit of an eminence on the right bank of the Tiber, in the garden of a villa approached by a straggling avenue of ilex and cypress.

The word "garden" suggests to our insular ears something bright and trim, and carefully tended. On the southern side of the Alps, however, it seldom means this. In the grounds of this old villa, it means an irregular space, sloping here, rising there; intersected by paths covered with coarse pebbly sand; and full of ilex and cypress trees growing up from plots of grass vividly green at this season of the year, and abundantly dotted with daisies. There are a few flowers scattered capriciously amidst the undergrowth of green, succulent-looking plants which thrive in the shadow of the ilex. A subtle odour of violets is in the air. Birds chirp and flutter with a soft whirr of little wings. Above is the spring sunshine, and an unfathomable depth of stainless blue. Out of the fretted lights and shadows beneath the gnarled old trees we step on to an open terrace, and look down on Rome and the Campagna.

Oh the beauty, and the wonder, and the sadness—the ineffable sadness—of all the vanished centuries which seem to linger above the scene, like disembodied spirits which have done with mortal life, and yet hover, earth-bound, round their ancient dwelling-place! And the beauty! Yes, for the varied hills before us are steeped in depths of colour, are rich with an infinite play of light and shade, are crowned by wreaths of fleecy snow melting into wreaths of fleecy clouds above them. They are piled up in one place like gigantic ocean waves which have suddenly stayed their rolling course, and hang poised and motionless, intensely, darkly blue, with crests of foam. Yonder is the towering peak of Soracte (the modern Sant' Oreste) sharp and stern. Shining whitely on the lower slopes of the blue hills are Tivoli, Frascati, Albano. Southward, the range sinks softly down, and melts into the vast expanse of the Campagna, purple on the distant horizon, and, nearer at hand, lovely with numberless tints of green, from dark olive to the tender hue of springing wheat, through which old Tiber winds his silent way.

And for the wonder of the scene, there is Rome at our feet! Rome, with her crumbling grandeurs, among which we know the petulant new life that fills her streets is now coursing heedlessly. Past the Forum and the Coliseum, as under the shadow of St. Peter's dome, carriages flash by with shining panels, and a glitter of silver, and a vision of gay head-gear and fair foreign faces. In the long line of the Corso we know that crowds troop up and down, and stare at the Parisian gewgaws behind clear sheets of glass, and bow, and grin, and sneer, and chatter. In Trastevere the brown-tinted children shout and play. The tinman hammers at his wares. The carpenter and the marble-cutter are at work with saw and chisel; and the bricklayer—carrying just such small cubes of baked clay as his remote forefathers built with—mounts his ladder leisurely, and pauses, with southern nonchalance, to consider where he shall deposit his by no means heavy load.

We know all this; and we know, too, somewhat of the things which History and Art are dumbly preaching to us from the stones of the Eternal City. But yet, looking down from this summit of Monte Mario, it is—shall I confess it?—not the greatness, but the littleness, of Rome, which oppresses my spirit. The aspect of nature is too vast, too impressive, too mighty, for even Rome to vie with it here.

What is this mistress of the world that we gaze upon?

A handful of pebbles, white, brown, and cream-coloured, flung down upon a limitless plain, stretching in mournful majesty to the limitless sea. The wilderness flows up to her very gates like a flood, and seems threatening to efface her. Her proud dome which covers such wealth, and pomp, and beauty, stands like a sentinel upon the edge of the mystical Campagna. The mountains and the plain are greater than the greatness of the city. They remain, awful in their enduring beauty, whilst palace, and temple, and Forum crumble slowly into dust. Cæsar and Brutus; soldier and slave; poet, orator, pontiff, and artisan; hordes of human creatures from north, south, east, and west, bringing tribute or terror; victors or vanquished—have passed in strange procession within view of yonder blue peak of Soracte, and marched from eternity to eternity across the purple plain of the Campagna.

Hark! Do you not hear martial music? See, far beneath us on the dusty road,

which shows from hence scarcely broader than my hand, there winds along a stream of ant-like specks. The breeze carries to our ears the blare of their trumpets, and the pulse of their drums. They are soldiers of the army of Italy, subjects of the king who reigns at the Capitol. Their music is echoed back from the walls of the Vatican where dwells that viceregent of Heaven, whose dominion *urbi et orbi* has at length come to an end, even as commonwealth and empire have ceased in the old days before him. March on, under the blue brightness of the Roman sky, oh, ye fighting men of to-day! March on—whither?

Unspeakable is the beauty, unspeakable the melancholy of the mountains, and the poetic plain, and the ineffable lights and shadows. Rome hums and stirs, lives and suffers in the midst. The soul feels strange yearnings—a strange sadness that is not all pain, an ecstasy of admiration that is not all pleasure. Down in the streets of the city, she will presently thrill at the contact of humanity. She, too, will feel the influence of the vivid, though transient, present, and live her fragment of mortal life in Rome, and awake to its wonders; to its greatness, its squalor, wealth, beauty, and decay. But here, and now, she longs with a vague longing as for the wings of a dove. She melts with a vague pity for the myriads who have played out their brief part upon this stately theatre of the world, and whose place knows them no longer.

Chirp! chirp! sings a little bird in the branches. The leaves of the ilex tremble a little in the breeze, and the cypress sways slowly, bending its taper summit with a graceful motion. A dark-eyed child steals up and thrusts a bunch of odorous violets into my hand. The soft wind ruffles them too, and carries their delicious breath away upon its wings. Fainter and fainter the sound of drum and trumpet seems to flicker in the distance like a dying flame, now high, now low. The sun is sinking westward, glorious in cloudless effulgence. Soon the brief southern twilight fills the sky; a sea of melted pearl, with a pale crescent moon and one attendant star sailing silverly through its depths. Tiny wings flutter restlessly, and then are still, among the dense dark foliage. The great mountains grow sombre, and the plain glimmers ghostly and grey. Yonder glides something that looks like the phantom of some classic Roman shrouded in voluminous white drapery. No; it is a wreath of mist, the fatal breath of the Campagna, the

deadly malaria in a visible form, crawling stealthily towards the streets of Rome.

The night is falling. Let us go down.

#### IN AN OMNIBUS.

JERK! Bang! With a clatter of hoofs on the stone pavement, as the horses slip back on their haunches, we suddenly pull up. There are six persons in the omnibus, which is constructed to hold twelve, so that we have ample room and verge enough. Of the six, one is English, one is an *impiegato*—a clerk in one or other of the government offices—one is a priest (N.B. I have not yet been in a Roman omnibus without finding at least one priest among the passengers), two are poplans, women of the people, and the sixth is a little old citizeness belonging to the circle just above these in the social scale; as is denoted by her bonnet, and a pair of kid gloves with the tips of the fingers cut off, which adorn her hands. The poplans wear nothing on their heads save a mass of greasy black plaits. In the case of the younger woman these appear to be made of hair growing on her own head. In the case of the elder—a fat, lemon-coloured person, who might pass for a Japanese *duenna*, if there be such things as *duennas* in Japan—the plaits seem to have been growing, at some antecedent period, on a horse's tail. Chignons and false hair are by no means confined to the aristocratic classes. Both these women are enveloped to the chin in common shawls, which allow nothing more to be seen of their attire than about half a yard of cotton-print skirt, reaching to the ankle. Of the ankle itself, and the foot, there is nothing complimentary to be said. They look rather as if they had been turned out of wood with a clumsy lathe, and supplied cheap. The priest is dignified, though dirty, in his voluminous black cloak and shovel hat. The Roman *impiegato* is rather spruce, with a dazzling rose-pink necktie. Of your humble servant the Englishman, there is no need to say a word of description, inasmuch as you have but to look out of your window to see a dozen like him.

Especially is it not worth while to waste time in describing him, because we began with a jerk, and a bang, and a sudden pulling up, the explanation of which you are waiting for all this time. But *pazienza!* That is our watchword, our motto, our open and shut sesame. You must not be in a hurry, good reader. Nobody else is so here.

We all sit still and look at each other,

or at the opposite side of the street for a minute or so, and then some one asks what is the matter. No one can say. At least, no one does say; so there ensues another, briefer pause, during which the Englishman with the restless energy of his nation, and the *impiegato*—who is evidently a rather lively fellow—crane their necks out of their respective windows to look ahead and see the cause of our sudden stoppage.

It is a somaro that has fallen down in the middle of the street. A somaro is a donkey. And this special donkey is heavily laden with sacks full of charcoal hanging on either side of him. The street is very narrow, and thickly frequented, and the prostrate somaro impedes the whole traffic. There he lies, poor beast, reposing on his side on one heap of sacks, whilst the opposite heap sticks up mountainously. His master contemplates him with a countenance whose expression is obscured by a thick layer of charcoal dust all over it. Our conductor leaves his post on the step of the omnibus, and goes up with folded arms to contemplate the donkey, too. Some shoemakers, who occupy a dark little shop under a beetle-browed archway, come to their door, last in hand, and also look steadfastly at the donkey. Meanwhile the donkey lies there very quietly, and betrays not the remotest intention of attempting to get up again. He has broken no bones, nor does he even seem to be hurt in any way. But there he lies with the air of finding a recumbent position a decided improvement on a standing one, and with a world of mild obstinacy expressed in every hair of his sagacious face, and every line of his poor lean body.

I must testify, to the honour of my Roman fellow-passengers, that they one and all express pity for the luckless animal. The women are very sorry for him. The *impiegato* observes that he has probably come a long way that morning heavily laden, and without a breakfast; and adds, shrugging his shoulders—sympathetically, not unfeelingly—"Già si vede ch'è mezzo affamato, povero diavolo!" "You can see he's half-starved, poor devil!"

Another pause, during which a volunteer comes forward and gives a tug at the old piece of rope which serves our somaro for a bridle, apparently with the expectation of thus inducing him to get on his feet. Not at all! The somaro merely winks slowly, and flicks his tail about in the dust. Now bounds upon the scene a little street boy, whooping that peculiar

whoop which is the universal language of street-boys, so far as I have observed the species. But even he soon desists from any active demonstration. He leaves off yelling, and stands to contemplate the donkey with the rest. A gentle melancholy is stealing over us all. I believe the omnibus horses have taken this opportunity to indulge in a nap. I know the priest has. The two *popolane* whisper in a subdued voice of their private affairs. Nobody seems to think of getting out. Nobody seems to think of going on. The Englishman begins to speculate on the possibility of finding his way to his inn on foot, through a labyrinth of back streets, inasmuch as there appears to be no prospect of the omnibus proceeding on its journey for an indefinite time to come.

All at once, with a loud rattle and clatter reverberated from the walls of the lofty old houses, drives up another omnibus behind us, and necessarily comes to a stand-still in our rear. To the surprise of the Englishman, but apparently without making much impression on any one else, the driver of omnibus number two launches, from the high vantage-ground of his box, a volley of scornful reproaches at the conductor of omnibus number one; our omnibus. "Now, then," he cries—to translate his modern Latin into barbarian vernacular—"what are you up to? What are you doing there, you parcel of blessed fools? Why don't you help? You, there," leaning down and throwing his sonorous syllables point-blank at the head of our conductor, "you, why don't you go and help to pick up the donkey? Are we to be here all day?"

A fiery spirit, this! A most extraordinarily impatient and eager spirit. He actually wants to get on! There must be some strain of classic Roman blood in the fellow. He is as haughty, as trenchant, as angry, and as ready to command all and sundry, as if he could boast of an unbroken descent from Coriolanus himself. Our conductor, however, is not destitute of dignity. When Coriolanus repeats disdainfully, "Now then, stoo-pid, why don't you go and help to pick up the donkey?" he merely ejaculates, with a languid half-turn of the head, and a superb arching of the eyebrows, "Io!" "What, I!" It is more eloquent than a longer speech. Meanwhile, such is the power of character, the energetic oburgations of Coriolanus have stimulated the charcoal man to something like exertion. After some vigorous



tugs at the rope bridle, and one or two resounding thwacks with a cudgel on the somaro's shining flank—neither of which applications produce the least effect on the unfortunate brute—the donkey's master hits on the bright expedient of unloading him.

"Of course!" says the impiegato, smiling sarcastically. "That is the only way. He could never get up with that load on his back. That is what should have been done before." One rather wonders why the impiegato has refrained from suggesting this obvious course before. But no doubt he has his reasons. When about half the sacks have been removed, the poor donkey struggles to his feet, and is led away beneath an archway, and down a narrow, gloomy lane, hanging his head, and staggering along on his thin weak legs, an affecting spectacle of unmerited affliction.

Our horses are startled from their doze by a sharp crack of the whip, and on we go again, rattling and clattering over the stony streets. Coriolanus follows in our wake mutely triumphant, and having gained his point, deigns to cast neither word nor glance upon us more. The popolane get out at a street corner, and slouch leisurely away, wrapped in their shawls. The impiegato presently leaves us with a flourishing salute to the foreigner. Lastly, the priest alights near to a church, and stalks up the steps of it.

He is succeeded by a railway porter with a bundle on his knee. And after the porter enter three stout shop-keepers, who reluctantly throw away their half-consumed cigars; for smoking is not allowed in the Roman omnibuses, "by order of the municipality," as is attested by a ticket hung up near the door.

Presently, in passing the church of St. Ignatius Loyola, we find ourselves in the midst of a dense crowd, and gradually decrease our pace, until we come to a full stop. The door of the church is open, and we have a glimpse of crimson damask, and of a blazing firmament of lighted tapers. A numerous congregation is pouring from the church, and a still more numerous body of spectators fills the street outside to see them pass. One of the Lent sermons preached by the Jesuits, and addressed chiefly to the noble dames of Rome, has just come to an end. The railway porter, a burly, broad-faced fellow with flourish-  
sienna coloured hands, begins a monologue:

"Ha! Here's a crowd to be sure! Per bacco! There are more people outside the church than in, certainly; but still, what a lot are pouring out of the doors. Well, it is wonderful. What do they come for? In the old days the churches were mostly empty. The folks wouldn't go to church, not they. And now that we've put down the priests, these geese flock to mass and vespers by the hundred. I believe they do it out of spite! Some folks are never contented. When the priests were uppermost, they wouldn't go to church. And now—just look! Per dio! Yes; I believe they do it out of spite."

Our conductor, standing on his step, and within easy conversational reach of the passengers inside the vehicle, suggests with a tolerant air of giving the devil his due, that perhaps some people may go to church out of devotion. The railway porter neither looks at, nor directly addresses him, but continues soliloquising like a man in a play; throwing his speech well at the audience, but yet not appearing conscious of their presence.

"Che devozione!" says he, as though the phrase had arisen spontaneously in his own mind, and were not the suggestion of an outsider. "Devotion, indeed—pooh! This is devotion," slapping his pockets; "make money, that's the thing! A good supper and a flask of good wine, that's devotion. Talk of devotion, indeed—che!"

Until the end of our journey our friend continues to pour out a voluble stream of words strongly flavoured with garlic, and all of the same illogical and inscrutable character. His eloquence is quite independent of coherence or intelligibility. What it tends to—if he knows—he is unable to convey to his hearers. But, like some orators of greater pretensions, he is quite satisfied with sound, if sense be wanting, and rambles on fluently, only stopping occasionally to chuckle and grin at some witticism of so subtle a character as to escape the appreciation of everybody save himself. But his great point, the phrase on which he piques himself, and repeats about thrice in every sentence, is, "They go out of spite."

"Don't tell me," says he, wagging his broad face and bull throat from side to side; "when the priests were uppermost, do you think the folks would flock to church? Nossignore! But now, only look! Per bacco! They do it out of spite, and nothing else!"

He is still harping on this rhetorical

triumph, when the omnibus reaches its journey's end. Suddenly descending from his rostrum, and associating with his brother mortals on common ground, he tucks his bundle under his arm, looks round on his fellow-passengers with a grin of good humour, touches his cap to them, nods familiarly to the conductor, and dives into a little wine shop; while the rest of us take our different ways across the huge space where the fountains of St. Peter's are sparkling in the sun.

### NOTES OR GOLD?

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NEVER FORGOTTEN," "FATAL ZERO," &c. &c.

#### CHAPTER XLVIII. THE EVENING BEFORE.

ALL Brickford, as may be conceived, was in commotion at the news that was now spread about. It was known that Mr. Doughty's relations had at last felt it their duty to interfere, and that the "unfortunate gentleman" was at that moment in restraint, or at least carefully watched in his own house. There was much astonishment, and much more moralising over this sad news.

The greatest wealth, it would be said, was not exempt from drawbacks. No matter how blessings might be distributed, there was still a general level to which most things were reduced. Still, there was a great deal of sympathy, for he was a charitable, gentle-tempered man, who had done good and won popularity; and there was a certain class of business men who, by a sort of instinct, arrived at the true conclusion, namely, that it was a suspicious-looking affair, and that there was some plotting at the bottom. These matters were talked of a great deal, and as Will Gardiner was not very restrained in his speech, and his wife said everywhere that the proceedings taken had been at the instigation of "the Dukes," it was not surprising that rumours should have begun to swell, and that much indignation should be expressed. The whole position of affairs indeed offered the strangest contrast to the state of things when our characters were first introduced to the reader. An amiable virtuoso, whom nobody thought anything of—a humble music-master and his daughter timorously trying to make their way—some polite average ladies and gentlemen of society clustering round. Now, the amiable virtuoso had become the victim of a con-

spiracy; the music-master's daughter had become a heroine, and been driven out on the world, and the average ladies and gentlemen have changed into fiercely contending parties, carrying out their ends without scruple or remorse.

Two of the conspirators met on the evening of that day—when it had grown dark; for such points the great lady now found herself considering. She made her way to the office of Mr. Birkenshaw. She was admitted in a secret and confidential fashion.

"It was imprudent not to have settled the matter to-day, and have done with it," said Mr. Birkenshaw; "the thing will get about in the town, and be talked of."

"Let it," said Lady Duke, stiffly. "They are welcome to talk. We, the relations, are acting in his interest."

"No doubt," said the other, with a deferential look; "but I still think it was unwise. That Gardiner will be sure to get himself released—he has plenty of friends, and he will give a great deal of trouble."

"You seem to me to misunderstand the whole matter," said Lady Duke, in her haughtiest manner. "By your way of talking, it would seem that there was some plot on foot. We are only acting in the regular way."

Mr. Birkenshaw again looked at her, and shook his head.

"No; you are under a mistake. Disabuse your mind of that at once, Lady Duke. If it were all regular, we should have no trouble. Neither would you have come to me. But these views are beside the matter; the point is, having got so far successfully, to finish off the whole on to-morrow. You should not have opposed me to-day at the house. By this moment he would have been safe, and under restraint, and undergoing the treatment proper for him."

He spoke these words decidedly, if not sternly, and Lady Duke felt a little awed, as if in the presence of some disagreeable and masterful personage. She did not contradict him, and after some further discourse of the same confidential kind, went her way, not without some misgivings.

#### CHAPTER XLIX. AN ANGEL IN THE HOUSE.

It was late in the evening, about the time when Brickford had nearly finished its dinner, and the lamps were lighted in the streets, that Corinna arrived. She did not go to her father's house in the

Crescent, but went straight to Mr. Doughty's. It was, indeed, a different Corinna to the one that had left it such a short time before. She had gone away a heroine, and returned one; but it was now a different kind of heroine. The first was all self-sacrifice, a sense that imparted a certain coldness, or the sternness of duty; the second a glowing, eager, impulsive girl, with fire and heroism in her eyes.

"I can have no scruples now," she said to herself again and again. "And, indeed, I allowed them to prey on me too long. Let them say what they will now. I am called on to act. I should be the most ungrateful and ungenerous of creatures, as indeed he must long since have thought me."

She felt a sort of elation at this casting away the bonds which had restrained her so long. Her plan was—and she felt a secret confidence that her strength in a good cause would overcome all that could be opposed to her, no matter how superior in force—her plan was to rescue this generous friend from his oppressors, set him free, and then return to the life of drudgery she had laid out for herself. Certainly she might seem a curious, incomprehensible being, as indeed she often appeared to herself.

Mr. Doughty was in his room on this night. Notwithstanding the curious events of the day he was in good spirits, ever and anon smiling to himself, and walking about with a sort of exultation. The guardians who were officially in charge were close at hand, though Doctor Spooner did not venture to show himself. Perhaps he felt that he could not longer carry out the fiction of its "all being for his own good" and "in the interest of the patient." He had thrown off the mask, and felt that the only thing remaining was to carry out the bold scheme he had contrived, fearlessly, to the end. It was a gloomy house at that time, that seemed oppressed with a sense of guilt and shame.

"This," said Mr. Doughty, as he paced to and fro, "has made the scales fall from my eyes. Now, indeed, the world and human nature have been revealed to me with a vengeance. I that used to think everybody so amiable and well-intentioned!—here am I now assailed, persecuted, and hunted by a vile set of conspirators. And she, too! For no fault of mine, but because I dared to like and to love her, do I find myself deserted! She has fled from me as if I were infected. I should not mind being deceived in the rest, but to be deceived in her! It

serves me right, though. What business had a middle-aged man with love or admiration? That is only for the young. When she hears the new revelation—which she will of course—this feeling will become contempt. It will be an insult that an elderly fellow, with nothing to compensate for his blemishes, should have dared to—but what am I saying—I do her injustice. I know I do! What was there in me, a poor foolish recluse, that should have attracted her. However, it was a pleasant dream while it lasted, though I would that I had not dreamed it, for it has left me cold, unhappy, and deserted. I must now only go back to my music and my fiddles, and try and get such comfort as I can out of them. Ah, mine is to be a weary life unto the end! But it serves me right."

And his head drooped upon his hands. The room was half darkened, the twilight was departing—he sat there in shadows. A gentle hand touched his shoulder, but he was not conscious of it. It touched him again, and then with a weary, though not surprised air, he raised his head.

He started up almost with a cry. She, the divine Corinna, stood before him with the sweetest and most encouraging expression. He gazed and wondered. He thought it was a vision, and that his long weary dream was still going on. For a moment he could not speak, but remained gazing at what seemed a beautiful apparition. After the long weary time that had gone by, the sickness, the imprisonment, he felt now like a captive whom some sweet angel had come to visit.

"You have come to me! I knew you would. I thought so all along," he said at last in a low voice. "Oh, if you knew how I have thought of you! How good, how noble, how generous of you to think of poor deserted me."

Somehow he did not seem to believe that this was any chance visit; he seemed by a sort of inspiration to have reached at the truth. He knew that she had come back to him to shield or to save him.

"I came," she said, "the instant that I heard. A kind friend let me know. I fear that you have thought me very unkind and very cruel, but if you were to know the reason, you would not think so hardly of me. All this I will tell you later, but now all I wish to show you is, that there is one friend who feels for you, and would do anything in the world to save you from your cruel persecutors."

Mr. Doughty was looking at her with

unspeakable gratitude, and almost adoration. All he could do was to repeat several times:

"And you have come to me! And what injustice I have done you. I thought I had offended you—made you my enemy by my foolish admiration, and driven you away—forced you to enter on a hard-working, toilsome life."

Corinna coloured a little, her eyes were cast down. She answered:

"I fear if we speak of offending—but all that is past now. We must save you from these wretches—I shall do it, if all the rest are wanting."

"You!" he said, with a curious look. "But have you thought of the difficulties? What can you do? They are all against me, every one. I am helpless here."

"No matter. I have instinct within which tells me I shall find means and strength. They will not dare to oppose me. I have confidence and I shall save you."

"But have you thought," he went on slowly, and still gazing at her with that look of earnest admiration—"have you thought of another danger, not for me, but for yourself?—what the cruel tongues of these people may do, how they will be busy with your name again?—making you suffer the old torture once more, just as they drove you from this place before? You must be saved from that."

"I have not thought of that," said Corinna. "Rather I am prepared to accept the worst as some penance or expiation. For I disdain to be carrying on any hypocritical pretences any longer, or to be imposing on your noble nature. I did not suffer from such things; I despised them too much for that. But there was another reason for this absurd sensitiveness."

Mr. Doughty was following her every word. With that sort of gentle chivalry which was his nature, he was determined to anticipate any confession that might hurt her pride, even at the risk of a new mortification for himself.

"You thought," he said, hesitatingly, "that your motives would be misconceived—by me, I mean; that your father's position, your own, mine—the 'great millionaire,' as they called me—excluded everything from the matter but self-interest. Yours was too lofty a nature to endure the suspicion of being made a mere instrument for securing money and fortune. And so you left this place, and went out into the world. I did not see this then, as I ought to have done; but what

you have done to-night has revealed it all to me."

She looked at him gratefully.

"This is the true solution," he went on, rather hurriedly; "for love or liking was of course a childish absurdity. You had given your heart to the young, as you should have done, or," he added, nervously, "you would have done had you found a heart worthy of you. As for myself, there was nothing but absurdity in the idea of a cold autumn love like mine, which I had the presumption to think of offering to you."

Corinna looked at him with honest, beaming eyes. "As you have spoken so generously and openly, I shall do the same. Why should I let you have such an idea, or think so meanly of me. No; of your love, the love of a noble, generous man, I should have been proud; I should have welcomed it as an honour. I was, indeed, caught for a time by the apparent devotion of another, but I soon saw how I had been led away. There was no real worth there. When I found that I had allowed myself to be so deceived, when I could so lightly have thought of giving my heart to the first that offered, I determined that I would not offer you the mere débris of such affection as I had to give. I felt that you might come at last to despise me, and thus it was that I appeared to make such a return to all your kindness. There is my whole confession, which I feel confusion in making to you. And I will tell you this further: had you, indeed, been a poor man, it would have been my pride to show you how much I felt the honour you had done me in thinking of one so unworthy of you as I am."

A sort of light seemed to spread over the listener's face, a sort of exultation.

"You do not mean this, surely?" he said. "These are merely words of comfort addressed to the poor invalid. How am I to venture to tell you? And you must learn to-morrow, if not sooner. And then you may fancy yourself bound by those words. Oh, Corinna! what will you do when you hear what I have to tell you?"

She looked at him in astonishment, but said, gently:

"Let me hear it at once."

"It was you, recollect," he went on, with a sort of pleading manner, "that said it. But you may not have thought what you were saying. Nor must you for a second think yourself bound by it. But oh, Corinna," he added, with an effort, "here



is the truth. I am the poor man such as you describe. The wealth that I was credited with has passed from me to another, and I am the poor, lonely, musical recluse that you first saw me!"

He did not dare to look at her face for a few moments, then raised his own doubtfully. She was smiling at him. He read in those holy eyes that all his troubles were ended.

#### CHAPTER L. CONSPIRATORS DISCOMFITED.

THE following morning was the brightest that Brickford had seen for many a day. There was some little flutter among the characters who have figured in this history, especially in the members of the Duke confederacy, who witnessed the approach of the momentous hour that was to see the crowning stroke of their operations.

It was an early hour when a carriage drove up to the door of Mr. Doughty's house, and when Mr. Birkenshaw and Doctor Spooner hurried out of it. Their ill-omened attendants were already waiting near the door, and met them as they came up. Now the stroke was to fall; and some good people passing, who knew "that poor Doughty," lamented the sudden toppling over of a fine intellect, a catastrophe, however, which was unhappily but too common, and was too often found to follow on a sudden access of wealth.

Mr. Doughty was in his room, waiting the guests that he expected. Who would have known him now—restored, bright, young—even as was the transformed Faust in Monsieur Gounod's opera? That night had brought him back his health—at least he thought no more of his sickness or his pains. Hope, joy, and even exultation, were on the face of that middle-aged lover.

The visitors entered with a hurried and determined manner, as though anticipating a disagreeable task, but were not a little confounded at the spectacle of the beaming, well-dressed, and even gay personage that had taken the place of the gloomy and almost hypochondriacal invalid they had quitted the day before. The cordiality and good humour with which he welcomed them was no less embarrassing. Doctor Spooner, however, began at once.

"Mr. Doughty," he said, "I must ask you to come with me for a short journey. I am authorised to do it, and hope you will not make any opposition, for it is for your good."

Mr. Doughty smiled and bowed with en-

joyment, as though he were laying himself out for a pleasant scene in a comedy.

"I know all that," he answered, gaily. "It is your duty, with other honourable motives, that prompts you. That, of course."

"That, of course," said Doctor Spooner, uneasily. "And we had better not lose any time, which, for you, is no doubt highly precious."

"Ah! visitors, I see," he said, from the window. "Come to say good-bye to me before I go."

Doctor Spooner answered rather roughly:

"We can have no more delays. No persons can be admitted here. I will not allow any such scenes as we had yesterday. See, Mr. Birkenshaw, that no one be admitted."

"Surely," said the other, mildly, "you would not deny me this small favour. It may be long before I have such a chance again. You are not going to be harsh to me on such an occasion."

There was a curiously ironical tone in all Mr. Doughty's words, that was making them more and more distrustful each moment.

"We have had trifling enough," said the doctor, "and can't allow any more."

"I fear you are too late," said Mr. Doughty. "Here are the visitors. What, William Gardiner! Why, I thought they had secured you. And my old friend Dodd come down to see me, at such a critical time! Well, this is kindness!"

It was, indeed, Will Gardiner, with his open, beaming face mantling with smiles and good humour.

"My dear, dear Doughty," he said, rushing to his friend, "this is more of your kindness. Oh, these rascals are here, are they!"

"Hush, hush!" said Mr. Doughty, angrily. "You must not speak to these gentlemen in that style. They are only doing their duty, and are to take me away in a few moments—that is, if they will think it worth their while, now that Mr. Dodd has come."

That gentleman advanced, smiling.

"My poor Doughty," he said, "in what a way to find you! I received your telegram," he went on, "and the amazing news it contained. Why, it is a romance. I saw Miss Nagle this morning, and she is coming here."

"Look here, gentlemen," said Doctor Spooner, with a sort of dogged fury in his eyes. "There is some understanding here

among you all. And I suppose you have planned all this. But, let me tell you, we are not to be put off from carrying out our purpose. We are authorised to do so by the proper parties, and are acting legally. I warn you, I have assistance here, and will tolerate no interference."

"No one shall interfere, my good Doctor Spooner," said Mr. Doughty. "You may depend on me. I shall go with you, never fear—that is, if you will take me."

"And these various parties," said Mr. Dodd, "if I might ask, who are they?"

"The relations, sir. Lady Duke and her husband. They will be here in a moment; I have sent for them. Never you fear; we know what we are about."

"Then I think she ought to be present. We might wait a moment for her. There can be no harm, especially as our friend here shows such willing dispositions."

They did wait, moodily and gloomily, for a few minutes. Doctor Spooner and his friend retired into the window. Will Gardiner looking at the two confederates with a wicked hostility that made them uncomfortable.

Mr. Dodd had just time to say to his friend, "Why, this is the noblest and most generous act in the world. But can you be serious—surely you know—" when the door opened, and Lady Duke entered excitedly. She started as she saw the room crowded, but instantly recovered herself, and then said with great promptitude and decision:

"Lose not a moment, Doctor Spooner. I authorise all, and am responsible. I wish everybody to be present now, as they insist on intruding here. The certificate is duly signed, and I am the nearest relation. There is an indelicacy in all this confusion and interference, but I am not accountable. Who is this gentleman?"

"An old friend of Mr. Doughty's, madam."

"It will not do, sir," said the lady, "if he gathered all the old friends he had in the world; they shall not be allowed to interfere."

"The lady is quite right," said Mr. Doughty. "And I think it is time this rather unpleasant scene should end. I am quite ready to go."

"There, you hear," said Doctor Spooner; "and I will ask all the visitors to retire."

"Yes, my dear kind friends, do go," said Mr. Doughty, "and let me get ready for this unusual journey. In fact, I am quite ready. My things can be packed later. In

fact, what shall I want with things in the palace I am going to visit?"

"You hear," said Lady Duke, in a low voice. "You hear those words—'a palace?'"

"This excitement," added the doctor, "may have the worst consequences, and increase our difficulties materially. I entreat you, gentlemen, go."

"I must just say one word," said Mr. Doughty, "as I may not have so favourable an opportunity hereafter, and my words will not naturally have the same effect. Lady Duke and Mr. Spooner will not object, I am sure. It is as to the property which I am supposed to be possessed of."

The doctor and Lady Duke looked intelligently at their neighbours.

"Supposed to be possessed of," he repeated. "I have no anxieties on that score to disturb me. Some time ago I had prepared a will leaving the whole, with the exception of a few legacies, to a person for whom I had the greatest regard. That will I destroyed, and it is just as well that I did, for I was disposing of what I had really no title to."

Again intelligent looks on the part of Lady Duke and her allies.

"Really what I am going to tell seems like a bit of romance; but you will understand it all in a few moments. My watchful friends here, Doctor Spooner and others, will recollect that they often found me searching through those trunks, and examining the papers they contained. The truth is, I not long ago found a memorandum alluding to a document which made quite a different disposition of the property as having been made, and I felt it my duty to search for it, which I did with great pains. I was rewarded for my trouble."

Lady Duke was beginning to turn pale. Doctor Spooner and his ally began to breathe hard.

"I was rewarded, I say, though some might think it was an odd sort of reward. I found," he went on slowly, "this paper, which is a will, a will of much later date than the document which made me be considered such a lucky man. There stands the real legatee, Mr. Dodd, the old friend of the testator. It is all his!"

A cry broke from Lady Duke. A furious burst of rage from Doctor Spooner.

"Now," continued Mr. Doughty, placidly, and rising from his chair, "having made my little disclosure, I am ready to go with you; will you take me?"

## CHAPTER LI. LAST SCENE OF ALL.

A SORT of stupor settled on the confederates.

Mr. Dodd inspected the document that was handed to him, with due gravity, and said:

"Ah! I had expected this, and, to say the truth, was a little astonished when I heard that another had been chosen. I am sorry for you, Doughty."

"I am not," said Mr. Doughty, smiling; "the loss of this, as you must know, may save me from some inconveniences which these good people were meditating for me. Liberty cannot be too dearly purchased. However, if they insist on it, I suppose I must go."

He still seemed to delight in keeping up the comedy of the situation.

"They have been at a vast deal of trouble, attending and watching me. Lady Duke, here, has been like a sister of charity. They are so concerned for my state that they have brought their people, and carriage, and everything. So, perhaps, we ought not to detain them."

Lady Duke was looking at him darkly.

"This is all very pleasant for you, and you think you have brought this trickery very happily to an end. As you say, justly, we have acted in your interest, and watched, and taken care of you. We are therefore prepared, in your interests," she added, sneeringly, "still to look after you. And, as all is ready for your removal, I am still willing to undertake your removal to a place where you will be duly cared for. Give the proper instructions, Doctor Spooner, and see that they are carried out."

Spite, rage, and disappointment were contending with each other in her face. But her agent only shook his head, as who should say, "the game is up."

"What," said Mr. Dodd, smiling, "my poor friend, who was known, and is known, as the shrewdest and most sensible of men, though under a very quiet and simple exterior, to be made out astray in his intellects! You made a sad mistake, madam, when you and your friends selected him for a victim—pitched on the wrong man entirely. But this is trifling. You may send away those people of yours that I saw below at the door. And this disinterested doctor and his friend may retire from your house, Doughty?"

Mr. Doughty, still pleasant over the matter, answered:

"Well, I am not going to force my com-

pany on them. But really, after this eagerness of weeks, and the general anxiety about, it is a little mortifying to find myself reduced to the position of a mere cypher. I am afraid that nobody will care about me now, or what becomes of me."

The two men retired, but Lady Duke held her ground. This proud lady was determined not to slink out in company with her defeated emissaries, but would hold her ground until some more creditable way of retiring offered. She trusted to the chances of events. But there was more mortification in store for her.

Mr. Doughty had gone several times to the window with some anxiety.

"I am glad you are remaining, Lady Duke," he said, "as I should wish you to be present when I have to make a little announcement rather interesting to myself and one other person."

"I have no interest in the matter," said the lady, haughtily.

"What, all gone within a few minutes?" inquired Mr. Doughty, good-humouredly. "Don't say that, for consistency's sake. Ah, here they come."

"My goodness gracious!" said a familiar voice. "My poor fellow, how they have been treating you." It was Mr. Nagle who had entered. "And so all the fortune's gone to another. This gentleman, I suppose." And Mr. Nagle looked at the new inheritor with a curious questioning look, as though trying to discover whether any musical tastes lurked within, whether he was married or single, or any way suited to prosper and further the Nagle fortunes. "Well, it can't be helped. By the way, here's Corinna coming up the stairs. She would come and see her old friend."

Lady Duke started. All her enemies were gathering to confront her. And here was the worst mortification of all, that this girl should arrive at such a moment to see her defeat. For Corinna she always entertained a special dislike, that began with that little scene where she had interrupted the composition of the posters. In presence of the lofty character of Corinna she always felt inferior. The girl, too, showed no awe of the woman.

There stood the enchanting Corinna, the music-master's daughter, in the doorway, looking round on them all with an expressible air of dignity and nobility. She seemed to be Corinna Victrix—the heroine who had won the victory through all the little vicissitudes of the story. Her gentle

gaze rested without hostility even on Lady Duke.

Mr. Doughty, no longer Old Doughty, so bright and happy was his face, advanced to meet her, and taking her hand led her into the room.

"At last," he said, "my troubles and trials have come to an end. Yet all through I have had this guiding star. True, I have lost all my wealth, but I have found this compensation and consolation, which I dared not have looked for had I kept my riches. As it now stands there is no connexion between the loss and the gain; but I can say this," he added, looking on the face of Corinna, "had I believed that this sacrifice was necessary, as the price for your affection, I should have paid it cheerfully."

Mr. Nagle was listening with wonder in his face. He said nothing, but it could be seen plainly that he thought this to be a foolish, weak, and injudicious view. However, he "washed his hands of the matter."

Corinna's eyes wandered round the room to the faces of all present, then rested on Mr. Doughty's.

"Henceforth my life is yours," she said. "Long before this," she added, "it would have been yours had the world here allowed it. It is my pride and joy to let this be known."

"A splendid gift," said Lady Duke, scornfully. "You bring quite a dowry to the husband you are so proud of."

"Lady Duke speaks with great accuracy," said Mr. Dodd. "Miss Corinna does bring with her a very sufficient dowry. I am a rich man myself, and am independent of any such windfalls as these. My old friend has refused to take back even a portion of what ill luck has deprived him of. But he cannot prevent me giving a portion to the young lady who has chosen to be his partner. When I return to town, I shall settle half of what has come to me on her. And much good may it do her," added the old amateur very warmly.

The cloud of doubt and bewilderment which for many weeks had hung over Mr. Nagle's face was now miraculously cleared away. He became of a sudden again the old familiar Nagle, proud and hopeful, such as he was seen at the commencement of this story.

#### L'ENVOI.

THE rest the ingenious reader will readily supply. He can easily call up the image of the enchanting Corinna, stately and magnificent, living in town, happy, loving, and a queen of song, admired and loved by her husband. Neither was she ashamed of, nor did she disclaim, or banish into rural districts with an allowance, that "odd father" of hers. She rather lent all her exertions to get him on. Thus aided he has found his way into fashionable circles, and really hopes in time to put down that pushing, "sneaking" Tympano who teaches the duchesses. A racy spectacle it is to see the veteran sit down to the instrument at some private party, and give the Death of Nelson after the fashion of the "late imperishable Braham." Fashionable people, however, receive this performance, the grotesque smilings, secret conferences with the keys, &c., with much amusement. Not in such company is found the great Lady Duke, about whose family and their fate one significant word was but too often uttered in polite circles when inquiries were made about it, namely, "smashed." She long lived in France, at Dinan, where the general naturally took high social position. Their son travelled about with his regiment, and was married, having been "taken in" by a faded young lady, an attorney's daughter at Chatham, a far worse match than the enchanting Corinna. That image often comes back on him in his uncomfortable life.

The last word shall deal with that heroine, who was more and more admired and followed, and by none more than by her husband, formerly familiarly known as Old Doughty, but now called by that irreverent appellation no longer. With him, and with many pleasures, her life goes on in a charming round. She wants nothing; has all that money and music can furnish; and having once chosen music in preference to money, shall never again "be put to her election" between "NOTES OR GOLD."

END OF NOTES OR GOLD?

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Next week will be commenced  
**A NEW SERIAL STORY,**  
 ENTITLED  
**YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE,**  
 By the Author of "HOBSON'S CHOICE," &c.

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